

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 STRASB 00005 072006Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15
TRSE-00 /069 W
-----072117Z 107306 /73

R 071845Z JAN 77
FM AMCONSUL STRASBOURG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0980
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL MARSEILLE
AMCONSUL BORDEAUX
AMCONSUL LYON
AMCONSUL NICE

UNCLAS STRASBOURG 05

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, FR.
SUBJECT: JJ-SS REELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE LORRAINE REGIONAL
COUNCIL.

1. SUMMARY - IN A NECK AND NECK RACE, JEAN-JACQUES SERVAN-SCHREIBER WAS REELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE REGIONAL COUNCIL OF LORRAINE, DEFEATING FORMER GAULLIST PRIME MINISTER PIERRE MESSMER. WHILE DEFEAT OF MESSMER IS A HUMILIATING BLOW TO THE GAULLISTS, AND MAY LEAD TO COMPETING MAJORITY SLATES IN FIRST ROUND OF APPROACHING MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, OBSERVERS HERE BELIEVE MAJORITY WILL CLOSE RANKS TO OPPOSE UNITED LEFT IN SECOND ROUND. END SUMMARY.

2. IN AN ELECTION WHICH DREW NATIONAL ATTENTION, JEAN-JACQUES SERVAN-SCHREIBER, DEPUTY FROM MEURTHE-ET-MOSELLE WAS NARROWLY REELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE CONSEIL REGIONAL OF LORRAINE ON THE 4TH BALLOT OVER FORMER PRIME MINISTER PIERRE MESSMER RPR DEPUTY-MAIRE OF SARREBOURG BY 32 VOTES TO 27, 5 VOTES WENT TO SOCIALIST DEPUTY-MAIRE OF BAR-LE-DUC, JEAN BERNARD. THERE WAS ONE BLANK
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STRASB 00005 072006Z

BALLOT. DURING THE 2ND AND 3RD BALLOTS - THE FIRST HAVING BEEN DECLARED VOID - THE TWO CANDIDATES WERE NECK AND NECK WITH 29 VOTES EACH. ON THE 4TH, TWO VOTES PREVIOUSLY CAST FOR MESSMER AND ONE BLANK BALLOT MOVED TO JJ-SS GIVING HIM A PLURALITY WHICH WAS ENOUGH FOR HIS ELECTION. THE LEFT, WHICH COULD HAVE INTERVENED DECISIVELY FOR EITHER CANDIDATE, REMAINED STEADFASTLY WITH ITS NOMINEE, JEAN BERNARD.

3. THE QUESTION ASKED THROUGHOUT THE AREA TODAY IS WHAT ARE THE CAUSES FOR JJ-SS'S VICTORY OVER ONE OF THE BARONS OF GAULLISM. THE ANSWER, OF COURSE, WILL BE FOUND IN HOW THE 60 MEMBERS OF THE MAJORITY JUDGED THE SITUATION IN TERMS OF REGIONAL NEEDS AND MORE IMPORTANTLY THEIR OWN POLITICAL FUTURE AND THAT OF THEIR GROUP.

4. CERTAINLY, THE PERSONALITIES AND THE CAMPAIGN TACTICS OF THE TWO CANDIDATES WERE IMPORTANT FACTORS. FROM THE BEGINNING IN A CURIOUS REVERSAL OF ROLES, JJ-SS THE USUALLY VOLATILE AGGRESSIVE FIGHTER, STOOD ON HIS RECORD, PLAYING THE REGIONAL CARD TO THE HILT. IN THE PAST YEAR, UNDER HIS PRESIDENCY AND LEADERSHIP, HE POINTED OUT MUCH HAD BEEN DONE FOR LORRAINE: THE DECISION TO BUILD THE METZ-DIJON AUTOROUTE WAS TAKEN, RENAULT DECIDED TO BUILD A TRUCK ASSEMBLY PLANT IN THE AREA, AND MOST RECENTLY THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED ON MASSIVE HELP TO THE IRON AND STEEL INDUSTRY. SUCH POSITIVE ACTION, HE CLAIMED, SHOULD BE CARRIED FORWARD IN THE COMING YEAR UNDER HIS CONTINUED LEADERSHIP. THIS "LET'S LOOK AT THE RECORD" STANCE, AND JJ-SS'S STEADFAST REFUSAL TO INVOLVE HIMSELF IN PERSONAL ATTACKS AGAINST MESSMER GAVE AN IMPRESSION OF SERIOUS ISSUE-ORIENTED CANDIDATE, WHICH WAS NOT WITHOUT EFFECT.

THE DECISION TO GO AHEAD WITH AUTOROUTE DID A GREAT DEAL TO SMOOTH THE STILL RUFFLED FEATHERS OF THE NANCEIENS STILL SMARTING FROM THE DECISION TO BUILD THE PARIS-STRASBOURG AUTOROUTE NORTH OF METZ ENTIRELY BY-PASSING NANCY. THE FACT THAT THE AUTOROUTE RUNS THE LENGTH OF THE REGION ALSO CONTRIBUTED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STRASB 00005 072006Z

TO A GROWING REGIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS WHICH JJ-SS HAS CAREFULLY CULTIVATED.

MESSMER, ON THE OTHER HAND, ABRUPTLY COMING OUT OF HIS USUAL RESERVE, DID HIMSELF NO GOOD BY HIS SHARP ATTACKS ON THE "PRESIDENTIAL" STYLE OF JJ-SS, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME ADMITTING THAT REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT HAD GONE WELL DURING THE YEAR.

5. STILL, A NUMBER OF COUNCIL MEMBERS, MANY WHO APPROVED JJ-SS'S ACTION DURING 1976, PARTICULARLY CENTRISTS IN THE MOSELLE, FOUND THEMSELVES PONDERING THE QUESTION OF HOW THEY WOULD BE REELECTED IN THE COMING MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS WITHOUT RPR SUPPORT. THIS WAS PARTICULARLY TRUE IN METZ AND THIONVILLE WHERE CENTRIST MAYORS DEPEND ON A COALITION LIST WITH THE RPR FOR THEIR ELECTION. AS THE CAMPAIGN WARMED UP, THE RPR THREAT TO WITHDRAW ITS SUPPORT FROM THE CENTER IN THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS IN MARCH IN CASE OF A MESSMER DEFEAT BECAME AN INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT FACTOR.

WHO SHIFTED FROM MESSMER TO JJ-SS? THE GAULLISTS CLAIM THEY

WERE AGAIN "BETRAYED" BY THE CENTRISTS OF THE MOSELLE AS THEY CLAIMED LAST YEAR. OTHERS SPECULATE THAT CERTAIN "OBSCURE" MODERATES IN THE MEURTHE-ET-MOSELLE SHIFTED TO JJ-SS, WHILE STILL OTHERS CLAIM THAT GAULLISTS VOTED AGAINST MESSMER TO PERMIT THE RPR TO WITHDRAW ITS SUPPORT OF THE CENTRISTS IN METZ, THIONVILLE AND NANCY. I CANNOT TAKE THIS ASSERTION SERIOUSLY. FOR MY PART, I THINK THE SHIFT OF VOTES MOST LIKELY TOOK PLACE AMONG CENTRISTS OF THE MOSELLE WHO HAVE CHAFED UNDER RPR PRETENSIONS TO DOMINATE THE DEPARTMENT, AND WHO ARE COMING TO SEE THE UTILITY OF WORKING WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS OF THE REGION TO OBTAIN ECONOMIC AID AND SUPPORT FROM PARIS.

6. WHAT EFFECT WILL THE ELECTION HAVE ON THE MAJORITY PARTIES IN THE FORTH COMING MUNICIPAL ELECTION? THE REACTION OF THE TWO SIDES AFTER THE RESULTS WERE ANNOUNCED WAS UNSURPRISING. JJ-SS PRAISED HIS OPPONENT AND CALLED FOR UNITY TO FACE REGIONAL PROBLEMS, WHILE THE HUMILIATED AND ANGRY GAULLISTS THREATENED UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STRASB 00005 072006Z

TO DRAW THE NECESSARY CONCLUSIONS FROM THE RESULTS WITH ONE DEPUTY GOING SO FAR AS TO STATE THAT THE GAULLISTS WOULD REFUSE TO BE MEMBERS OF ELECTORAL LISTS HEADED BY MAYOR RAUSCH OF METZ OR MAYOR DITSCH OF THIONVILLE.

7. INSPITE OF ITS ANGER, RPR LEADERSHIP IN DRAWING ITS CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE ELECTION MAY HAVE TO FACE THE DISMAL FACT ADVANCED BY POLITICAL WISEACRES DURING THE PAST YEAR, THAT INSPITE OF ITS RELATIVE SUCCESS IN THE CANTONAL ELECTIONS AND THE FLASHY BEGINNING OF THE RPR, THAT THE DAYS ARE PAST WHEN THE GAULLISTS CAN DOMINATE THE SCENE IN LORRAINE OR EVEN IN THE MOSELLE. NEW ABLE MEN ARE ON THE SCENE WHO WILL NO LONGER UNQUESTIONINGLY ACCEPT THE LEADERSHIP OF THE OLD LINE GAULLISTS AND WHILE THESE NEW MEN UNDERSTAND THEIR NEED FOR GAULLIST SUPPORT, THEY ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT THE GAULLISTS NEED THEIRS IN THE COMMON BATTLE AGAINST THE UNITED LEFT. THEREFORE, ON THE REGIONAL SCENE AT LEAST, WHILE THERE MAY BE OPPOSING MAJORITY LISTS IN THE FIRST ROUND OF THE MUNICIPALS, THE CONVENTIONAL WISDOM HERE STATES THAT THE PARTIES OF THE MAJORITY WILL MAKE COMMON CAUSE IN THE SECOND ROUND RATHER THAN TO RISK THE LOSS OF SUCH CITIES AS METZ OR THIONVILLE TO THE LEFT. IN OTHER WORDS, THE FIRST ROUND OF THE MUNICIPALS WILL BE A SORT OF PRIMARY FOR THE PARTIES OF THE MAJORITY AND SOME OBSERVERS HERE CLAIM THAT THERE IS A TACIT AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CENTRISTS AS REPRESENTED BY JJ-SS AND THE RPR NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS TO TREAT THE FIRST ROUND AS JUST THAT. IN ANY CASE, OBSERVERS HERE FIND INTERESTING THE STATEMENT OF JEROME MONOD THAT THE REELECTION OF JJ-SS AND THE DEFEAT OF ONE OF THE GAULLISTS' BARONS IS "UNSURPRISING" AND WITHOUT ANY NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE. THAT A NATIONAL LEADER OF RPR CAN CHARACTERIZE THE DEFEAT OF ONE OF ITS LEADING MEMBERS AS

UNSURPRISING IS INTERPRETED IN SOME CIRCLES AS AN INDICATION
THAT RPR NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS DO NOT WISH TO GO TO WAR WITH
THE CENTER IN THIS AREA, SUCH AN ACTION BEING CONSIDERED AS
HAVING CONSEQUENCES FAR TOO GRAVE FOR THE UNITY OF A MAJORITY
FACING AN INCREASINGLY POWERFUL CHALLENGE FROM THE LEFT.
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STRASB 00005 072006Z

8. FINALLY, JJ-SS'S REELECTION CONFIRMS HIM AS A SERIOUS
EFFECTIVE POLITICIAN, WHO DID MUCH TO POPULARIZE THE CONCEPT
OF REGIONALISM IN AN AREA WHERE SUCH A CONCEPT BECAUSE OF
LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES LONG HAS BEEN GREETED WITH
INDIFFERENCE OR HOSTILITY.ROMINE

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS, PROVINCIAL OFFICIALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 07-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STRASB00005
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770007-0787
Format: TEL
From: STRASBOURG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770170/aaaacyb.tel
Line Count: 187
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 378430dc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3641048
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JJ-SS REELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE LORRAINE REGIONAL COUNCIL.
TAGS: PINT, FR, (MESSMER, PIERRE), (SERVAN-SCHREIBER, JEAN-JACQUES)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/378430dc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009